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## V.

# THE POSITION OF THE JEWS IN AMERICA.

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### FIRST ARTICLE.

"Perhaps the most remarkable fact, in the history of modern Judaism, is the extension of the Jews in the United States."—(Milman.)

It is wellnigh 2,500 years since the prophet Jeremiah sent an epistle to his captive brethren in Babylon, advising them concerning the course of life they should pursue. In that epistle he exhorts them to "build houses and dwell in them; plant gardens, and eat the fruit of them; take wives, and give their children in marriage, that they may be increased and not diminished; to seek the peace of the city, and pray unto the Lord for it; for in the peace thereof shall they have peace!"\* No word better deserved to be called prophetic than this, for it anticipated the needs of dispersed Israel for thousands of years; nor do we know of any utterance which more strikingly reveals the freedom of prophetic thought. Hebrew patriotism had the power and depth of a religious passion. The possession of the land of promise was proof of the continuance, its loss of the forfeiture of Heaven's favor. To be separated from its hallowed associations was like banishment from the face of God.† In repentance lay the only hope of the captives of returning to their beloved home, and it appeared a necessary part of their penance, to refuse the proffered hospitality of the conqueror. The over-zealous among them fed that morbid feeling by predictions of a speedy termination of the captivity. Jeremiah read the signs of the times with greater accuracy, and saw that they did not warrant that expectation. But, whenever that longed-for event might happen, it was clear to him that it should not be allowed to interfere with any present duty, or the attainment of present happiness.

\* Jeremiah xxix. 5-7.

† Psalms xlii., xliii., lxiii.; 1 Samuel xxvi. 10.

It is worthy of note that the counsel of Jeremiah embodied the three chief elements of strength in the Hebrew race, industry, home-life, and prayer. Philipsohn does not perhaps overrate the importance of this message, when he characterizes it as the first attempt "to separate the religious from the civil interests of the people, foreshadowing a change which was to be accomplished in much later times, and after many national vicissitudes." \*

What the priest-prophet did for his banished brethren during the first captivity, a rabbi, also of priestly stock, accomplished in a still bolder manner during the second, eight hundred years later. During these centuries, Palestine had risen to independence and power, but had also fallen again to the old ruin, and her children dwelt as before in the land of the stranger. The grave problem was once more presented, How far shall allegiance to the national cause extend? This time, however, it was not the land, but the law, in which the love of the Israelite centred. The law had become his true home, the consecrated ground on which he stood, as in the presence of the Most Holy. It overshadowed the golden gates and fretted domes of the temple. Its study more than compensated for the silenced songs of the Levites, and the lost sacrifices of the priests. The academies, both in Palestine and Babylonia, where the flower of Hebrew youths sat at the feet of renowned masters; the synagogues, thronged daily with devout worshipers, who "drank in with thirst" the words of those who "preached Moses and the prophets," threw into the background the vanished glories of Zion. Generations of learned men had expanded the demands of the Mosaic law to such vast proportions that they completely covered the life of the faithful from the cradle to the grave. Collisions with the civil institutions were inevitable the moment they stepped beyond the limits of Palestine. Many changes had also passed over the scene where the first exiles received Jeremiah's message; they had led up to the restoration of the Persian throne; and its occupant, from the year c. E. 238. Shabur I. was not less friendly toward the Jews than his predecessor Cyrus had been. But the jurisdiction claimed by the rabbis in civil and penal, as well as in purely religious matters, resulted in a self-imposed exclusion from the benefits of a just government, which could not fail to

\* "Bibelwerk," *in loco*.

be in the end disastrous. Mar Samuel,\* the most eminent civil jurist of a time rich in legal erudition, and renowned as a physician and astronomer, resembled Jeremiah in the clear perception of what the hour demanded. In the very teeth of all tradition he enunciated the guiding principle, that "in all civil matters what is law for the land of his sojourn shall also be, henceforth, law for the Jew. The authority of a Gentile government was thus formally recognized, and submission to its decrees invested with the sanction of religion. Samuel's example gave force to his teaching; his intercourse with learned Magians was intimate, and his influence at court so great that he was surnamed "the Jewish King Shabur."

Like all reforms, this one met with strenuous opposition. The hope of restoration was yet vivid in the minds of the Jews. An heroic race is not easily reconciled to permanent defeat, and Mar Samuel's concession seemed to admit it. With the glorious deeds of the unfortunate defenders of their country fresh on their memory, it is not surprising to find the Jews, during the first centuries after the Roman conquest, joining in insurrectionary movements that promised to restore their lost independence. As time wore on, however, the expectation waned; the veneration for the Holy Land assumed more and more the character of a religious hope, and became an article of creed, rather than an incentive to warlike action. Generations arose, in whom community of language, custom, and practical interests, produced an affinity with the nations among whom they lived, against which the old traditions were powerless. Time and circumstances thus paved the way for the general adoption of the principle of the Babylonian master. By it the Jews have ever since been governed in their relations with the Gentile world; and, wherever governments accepted it in good faith, the Jews proved a source of strength, wealth, and intellectual activity; at certain periods these "blind men" have been the torch-bearers of science and philosophy. The greatest rulers known in history, Cyrus, Alexander the Great, Cæsar, Charlemagne, Abdul-Rahman of Moham-medan and Alfonso of Christian Spain; Frederick II., the Ho-

\* D. Hoffmann; Mar Samuel, "Lebensbild eines talmudischen Weisen." Leipsig, Leiner, 1873. Grätz, "Geschichte der Juden," vol. iv., p. 231.

henstaufen ; Cromwell, Joseph II., and Napoleon I., have fully acknowledged their services.

These names are, however, but isolated stars in the long night through which the Jews have passed. Their offer to submit to the laws of the state was scorned, and the world's motto became, "What is law for everybody is none for the Jew." That which bore the name of law was but a contrivance for his destruction. Society declared war against him, and he had no alternative but to fight for his life as best he could. One by one the avenues to the learned professions, and even to the ordinary handicrafts, were closed against him. His favorite occupation, agriculture, certain branches of which he at one time monopolized, was forcibly taken from him, and he was thus driven to his last citadel—trade. From it the cruelest legislation could not drive him, for he could not be robbed of the superior skill which he gradually acquired. The trading proclivities have ceased to be a reproach to the Hebrew, and not only because they were the natural result of the treatment he received, but because the civilizing power of trade is better understood.

The Hebrew that followed the blood-stained footsteps of the Roman legions into Spain, through Gaul, and along the Rhine,\* reclaimed the devastated fields, helped to establish colonies, and, by buying and selling the captive men and women, saved them from the sword to which, otherwise, they would have been put. In the middle ages, when the strength of Christendom was consumed in the crusades, and in hereditary feuds, the presence of a class devoted to the arts of peace was a benefit ; it saved society from sinking deeper into the barbarism into which the vaunted age of chivalry threw the nations of Europe.† Historians express surprise that, despite the most stringent laws of exclusion, and the frequent spoliations, the Jews of the middle ages remained

\* Jewish settlements in those regions of Europe date back to the pre-Christian period.

† "The loss of gold and silver which disappeared with the Jews from Spain would have been replaced before long by the influx of the precious metals from America ; but the loss of industry was irreparable in a country where pride and indolence proscribed all such pursuits as base and sordid, and where the richest body, the Church, contributed nothing, either directly, or by the improvement of the land, to the support of the state. With the Moors and the Jews vanished all the rich cultivation of the soil, and all internal and external commerce" (Milman).

the masters of the marts, and the controllers of the finances of the world. There is, however, nothing wonderful in all this. If all the world was hostile to the Jew, Nature, at least, was not so. To his versatility, his experience, his knowledge of the languages and wants of the different countries, he was solely indebted for his dominion over the market and the exchange. His money could, of course, be taken from him by violence, but he knew the potent charm of luring it back. His crude and superstitious enemies ascribed it to the devil, but to us it is no more miraculous or wicked than the attraction of the magnet. All the laws which prohibited the Jews from holding fiscal offices were null and void practically, since he was the only financier that could fill the empty coffers of the state ; in like manner the thunders of the Church were as nothing when they pretended to banish the Hebrew physician from the sick-chamber of the Christian. Life and health are dear to pope and king as well as to other mortals, and, if Hebrew skill can save the body, the Church must condone the sin of accepting the help of a heretic. Europe, in forcing the Jew into trade, created him, to a certain extent, master of the situation. He was compelled, it is true, to hide his weapon under the rags of apparent poverty, and to assume the air of humility ; nor can it be wondered at that trading and money-lending, if practised among a population taught to look upon cheating the Jew as lawful before man, and meritorious before God, should produce certain demoralizing effects. What is remarkable, however, is this : that a race, whose life was one continuous struggle, who were chased from land to land, who bore a load of obloquy which might well unman the stoutest hearts, should have continued their intellectual and literary pursuits without an interruption. Is it not amazing that, among a people thus conditioned, should be found at all times men of commanding intellect, who gathered around them throngs of eager disciples : poets, who sung their sorrows and their hopes in the lofty strains of David and Isaiah, teachers of a morality, which needs shun no comparison with that of any religion ; thinkers, who pondered over the last problems of metaphysics ; mystics, who soared aloft on the wings of speculative imagination ; jurists, who expounded and elaborated the legal codes of the Babylonian academies ; historians, who chronicled the sufferings of their tribe, and the shame of their mur-

derers? This I hold to be the greatest achievement of Israel's genius and Israel's faith.

Disraeli speaks of the indomitable spirit of a people "that persists in celebrating their vintage, although they have no fruits to gather;" but it pales before the sublimer courage which clung to and cultivated the intellectual vineyards of Israel,\* when death, in its most hideous forms, waited at the gate, when the only increase was—tears; and when, instead of the merry songs of the gleaners, were heard the groanings of the tortured and the sighs of the dying. The mere existence of the Jew to this day is admitted to be a miracle; then what shall we say in presence of the fact that he preserved his intellectual life, and continued its expression in a literature as abundant as that of any people? Of the mind of Israel it is more true than of his body: "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, and they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee."†

Freedom alone can be just to the living and to the dead. Now that history has ceased to be the handmaid of Church or state, and has, if I may say so, gained a conscience of her own, the veil is lifted, behind which the contributions of the Jews to science in the middle ages lay hidden. When eminent scientists like Draper‡ and Schleiden,§ yielding simply to the force of facts, offer this generous tribute of recognition to the long-despised race; when high dignitaries of the Church, as Milman, all his strongly-marked Christian leanings notwithstanding, have learned to tell the tale of Israel's wanderings and workings with such a strong desire for fairness and impartiality; and when Hebrew literature has found her own spokesmen, whose marvelous labors within this century have conquered for her, at last, that place in the world of letters which is her due—we can no longer doubt that the day of justice has dawned, and that, by its light, the past will be fully vindicated.

\* Kerem (vineyard), and Eshkol (grape), the latter an alliteration to *schola*, were favorite terms of the rabbis for the assemblies of the learned.

† Isaiah xliii. 2.

‡ "History of the Intellectual Development of Europe," vol. i., p. 381, *et seq.*

§ In his paper on the "Contributions of the Jews to Science."

But what of the present? This nineteenth century has wrought great changes throughout the civilized world, and has materially affected the social position and the religious life of the Jews, and the question arises, whether, under the influence of these changes, they have lost any of those qualities which were the immediate causes of their preservation. Their more recent settlement in this country affords, probably, the most instructive phase in the modern development of Jewish history. It fell within the memory of the living generation, was rapid in its progress, and is full of promise of much larger results in the future. Here the greatest measure of individual liberty he has ever enjoyed awaited the Hebrew immigrant, who, in not a few instances, came right from under the yoke of oppression. Many were strangers to the language, the habits, the peculiar forms, and the conditions of the trade and the industries of the country. They had, therefore, to build up their position from the very foundation. It is the object of this paper to give an account of their labors, and the use they made of their opportunities.

There is great difference of opinion with regard to the number of Israelites in the United States. Estimates have been formed ranging all the way from 250,000 to 1,600,000: that the latter is an enormous exaggeration is evident from the religious statistics of the official census of 1870; its figures make it hardly safe to go beyond 200,000. But means have recently been devised that promise to put an end to all mere conjecture. At the Convention of the Board of Delegates of American Israelites, in 1876, a committee was appointed for the purpose of collecting statistics, in conjunction with the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, the latter being chiefly a Western organization. This was to be accomplished by direct inquiries at all places where Jews were known or supposed to have settled. At last year's convention, held in this city, the chairman of the committee, Mr. Hackenburg, of Philadelphia, submitted his first report. It comprised returns from 174 congregations and 157 benevolent institutions and societies. This, however, does not cover the whole ground, the committee having sent out blanks to 300 congregations. With some exceptions, however, the most important bodies have responded, and it is safe to take the figures of the report as a basis for calculation. From the data thus obtained, and after making ample al-



lowance for the places yet to be heard from, the committee reached the conclusion that the number of Jews in the United States cannot exceed 250,000. The reason for the extravagant numbers usually mentioned is to be found in the fact that the Israelites, being principally engaged in trade and manufactures, are brought more prominently before the public than their actual numbers would seem to warrant. They collect, moreover, at the larger centres of commerce; and, because there are some 50,000 in this city, people jump at the conclusion that they are equally numerous in all parts of the Union. This is so far from being the fact that many cities have no Jewish population, and many others but a very insignificant one. But, in order to avoid under-estimation, let us make a further addition of 50,000 to the figures obtained by the board, and thus safely accept 300,000 as the number of Israelites in the United States.

The census of 1850 placed the number of Jews in the United States at 15,000. This, however, was but approximate. The difficulties with which we have to contend even nowadays, in the attempt to obtain exact figures, must have been much greater at that time; for then the immigrants were not in a position to organize themselves into communities and societies. Admitting, then, the estimate to have been too low, it proves that their number cannot have been very large. The strong tide of immigration, therefore, set in from the year 1850, an assumption corroborated by the oldest Hebrew settlers. If we further take into account the fact that immigration in general, and consequently that of Jews also, has materially decreased during the last three years, and that the losses caused by the protracted depression of business, and depreciation of real estate and other investments, fell with particular severity upon that part of the community, whose prosperity depends so largely on commerce, and that, therefore, the creation of new institutions became all but impossible, it may safely be said that the by far largest portion of what has been achieved by the Israelites of this country is the work of *one-quarter of a century*.

The extent of that work will appear from the following:

The census returns of 1870 show the increase of associated efforts for religious and charitable ends in this table:

YEARS.	Churches.	Accommodation.	Property.
1850.....	36	18,371	\$418,600
1860.....	77	34,412	1,135,300
1870.....	Edifices. 152	73,265	5,155,234

These numbers cannot, however, be accepted as wholly correct; for the committee of the Board of Delegates found the number of congregations to be 300, and that of institutions and societies 157, in all 457 organizations, an augmentation which the seven years that have elapsed since the census was taken are insufficient to account for. The total membership, taken from the committee's returns, so far as received, is 11,507, and the value of church and other property amounts to \$5,897,400. The completed returns will probably show the membership to be about 16,000, and the value of property not far from \$8,000,000.

"There are under the exclusive control of Jews fourteen public institutions, some of which are not sectarian in their benefits. They are: the Mount Sinai Hospital, New York; Jewish Hospital, Philadelphia; Hebrew Hospital, Baltimore; Jewish Hospital, Cincinnati; Touro Infirmary, New Orleans; Hebrew Orphan Asylum, New York; Jewish Foster Home and Orphan Asylum, Philadelphia; Benai Berith Orphan Asylum, Cleveland; Orphan Asylum, Baltimore; Orphan Asylum, San Francisco; Widows' Home and Orphan Asylum, New Orleans; Home for Aged and Infirm Hebrews, New York; Jewish Home for the Aged and Infirm, connected with Jewish Hospital, Philadelphia.\*

All these institutions are entirely disconnected from the congregations, and are supported by Jews of all shades of opinion, including many who are outside of all congregational connections. But the hospitals by no means represent the care taken of the poor sick. There are numerous societies devoted to that object all over the land, based on the principle of mutual helpfulness. Those who are lean in purse find help through benevolent associations of all sorts; and there is not a place in the Union, where even a handful of Israelites dwell, that has not its charita-

\* From the report.

ble society. The united Hebrew charities of New York, admirably organized, expend \$40,000 annually for the support of the poor. There are special societies for clothing them, for providing fuel, for attending to women in confinement, for the free burial of the dead, etc., besides numerous others of larger or smaller dimensions.

On a recent occasion Mayor Ely made the following statement :

“I recently read the following item in the *Irish-American*, a Catholic paper published in this city : ‘The Jews form ten per cent. of our population, and contribute less than one per cent. to the criminal classes.’ I took upon myself the trouble to investigate this matter, and called on the Commissioners of Charities and Correction, and there found some startling statistics, which I am happy to read to you.

“In the Bellevue Hospital there are 895 patients, and only 1 Jew ; Charity Hospital, 945 patients, 5 Jews ; Homœopathic Hospital, 601 patients, no Jews ; Nursery, 1,017 inmates, no Jews ; Hart’s Island Hospital, 383 patients, no Jews ; City Prison, 485 prisoners, 8 Jews ; Workhouse, 1,178 inmates, 7 Jews ; Penitentiary, 1,110 prisoners, 12 Jews ; Almshouse, 1,437 paupers, and no Jews. So you see by these statistics that out of over 8,000 persons there are only 33 Jews. This is very creditable both to yourselves and your organizations, and I hope your charity and generosity are not exhausted.”

Beyond the support which the law secures to the larger benevolent organizations, such as hospitals, asylums, etc., they receive no assistance in that great work beyond some free-will gifts of individuals. These are considerable when contingencies arise which necessitate an appeal to the public at large, such as fairs ; but, as a general rule, the burdens are cheerfully borne by the Israelites themselves.

Provident societies, too, abound. We must mention here the Jewish orders, of which we shall have to speak more in detail in another connection. They are :

1. Independent Order of Benai Berith (Sons of the Covenant), with 7 grand lodges, 271 lodges, and 20,000 members ; \$160,500 was paid by this order, in 1875, for sick and endowment benefits, and it held in January, 1876, \$535,700 in cash or investments.

2. Independent Order of Free Sons of Israel, with 2 grand

lodges, 86 lodges, 8,604 members. It paid, in 1875, \$59,500 for sick and endowment benefits, and had, January, 1876, \$58,350 on hand.

3. Order Keshet shel Barzel (Bond of Iron) has 5 grand lodges, 152 lodges, and 10,000 members.

4. Improved Order of Free Sons of Israel has 1 grand lodge, 34 lodges, and 2,632 members. It paid, in 1875, \$19,500, and holds \$23,500 on hand.

These organizations presuppose, of course, considerable prosperity among their supporters; for, without the command of the means, the best intentions would have remained barren of results. A prosperous class the Israelites of this country, no doubt, are; but we deem it right to remind the reader of two things in reference to that part of our subject: first, the proportion of the middle class and of the actually poor is much larger than is generally supposed. The expenditure of capital and labor for their relief abundantly proves this. By far the largest numbers of families and individuals, who are daily struggling for the necessities of life, come from the dominions of the czar; happy those who escape from that grinding tyranny! But their chances for competing here with the more favored laboring-classes are of the slenderest. The cruel oppression which the "paternal" government of the Muscovite exercises on the two millions of its Hebrew subjects burdens the acquirement of a handicraft with almost insuperable difficulties, and makes its practice precarious and unremunerative; it has, besides, perpetuated a form of orthodox Judaism happily unknown anywhere else. Even in Oriental countries, where the Jew has lapsed into the same state of mental stagnation that prevails around him, such rigid proscription of secular knowledge, such fanatical opposition to any, even the slightest, departure from established usage, is unknown. Religion is paramount; she dictates every step of the Jew of Poland and Russia, and holds exclusive possession of his mind. Gifted beyond the common measure of a gifted race, acute and subtle in intellect, vivid in imagination, and intensely Oriental in fervor and enthusiasm, he has raised rabbinical Judaism to a position of command such as it never before possessed, and one which is probably unsurpassed by any church or creed. To it alone are devoted the days and nights of the scholar, the ambi-

tion of those eager for renown, the homage of wealth, and the devotion of every pious heart. This is not unnatural either, for it is the only domain in which the Jew can save his manhood, assert his freedom, employ his faculties, escape the iron grasp of the minions of oppression, and satisfy the aspirations of his soul. The tale of the woes of these millions of sufferers deserves to be told to the American people more fully than this article allows, and pondered by them, before they hail the victories of the Russian arms, and rejoice in the threatened extinction of Turkey, a land which in the matter of liberty and toleration is now, and always has been, far in advance of her northern foe.

From those regions of Cimmerian darkness come most of the poorest immigrants. The difficulties they encounter in their way here are, we venture to say, formidable beyond those of any other class they have to contend with. With no education, in the adopted sense of the word, often unbred to any handicraft, and almost always accompanied by wife and children; hampered in so many ways by his scrupulous attention to religious ceremonies; without means to push his way in this New World, it is a marvel that he should be able to subsist at all. Yet, he does live, never yields to drunkenness or sinks to pauperism, and preserves his domestic virtues. Not a few of this class rise to comfortable circumstances, and even to affluence. The "Polish Jew" may be a welcome object of sport to the penny-a-liner; he must appear something very different to the eye of the thoughtful, candid, and sympathetic observer. That he is no burden to the community in which he lives, is due to the sterling qualities he possesses, to the thoroughly practical and domestic character of his religion, and to the sympathy he finds here, as everywhere, at the hand of his brethren.

Another popular superstition with regard to the prosperity of the Jews ought to be mentioned. The impression prevails that they obtain riches with the facility of a genius—that they need only appear on the scene to attract to themselves, as if by magic, the wealth of nations. Because of his proverbial thriftiness, and because of the prominence, in the exchanges and marts of the world, of some Jewish firms, it is supposed that he needs only to will it, and treasures will flow into his coffers, without any equivalent in toil, self-denial, and risks of life or capital. Nothing can be fur-

ther from the truth. If there be any genius in his success, it is the genius for patience, courage, diligence, economy, and consecration of earnings to the comfort and elevation of his family. Prosperity does not come to the Jew any more than it comes to other people, as Dogberry says reading and writing come, "by nature." If the Jews indeed possess superior mercantile and economical qualities, they have paid dearly enough for them. It is true that some were borne to the front ranks by the tidal-wave of lucky speculation. Quite as many, however, have been swept away and out of sight by the retreating tide. Those whose fortunes rest on a solid basis have secured it in the sweat of their brows, with downright hard work, rigid economy, severe self-denial, and resistance to the spirit of wild speculation that seized America after the war. The fact is, the Jew has no talent for what the Germans call *Leichtlebigkeit*; he seldom understands the art of taking things easily.\* Seriousness is, in our day, as Matthew Arnold found it to be in ancient times, the ground-note of his temperament. Hence the fervor of his language, the liveliness of his gestures, the warmth of his partisanship, and his stubbornness. Joy and sorrow, hope and fear, success and defeat, touch him to the quick. His laughter and his lament are loud and demonstrative, because his heart leaps with joy or sinks with grief. He is still the man of the Psalms, of the book of Job, and of Jeremiah's Lamentations; and, as in former days, so also at the present time, he is, on that account, an enigma to his observers.

When, thirty or forty years ago, the current of Hebrew immigration set in strongly, what encouragement did it find? Beyond freedom to use his brains and his arms (and we have no desire to underrate these primary conditions of success), very little indeed. Only in some of the larger cities of the Union had Hebrew families resided long enough to secure for themselves a recognized position, both social and commercial. Prejudice, if it existed, was silent in the presence of families who were favorably known to their surroundings, and who bore themselves in their social intercourse after the manner of polite American society.

\* The poet Heine tried the experiment: how miserably he failed, everybody knows. He did not quit this life before he had repented of his "Hellenic proclivities," and restored in himself as much of the old "Hebrew seriousness" as he was capable of toward the end of a shattered life.

They had grown up with the republic, shared her fortunes, fought in her ranks, and contributed, after the measure of their power, to the consolidation of her institutions. It was different with the later settlers, who were unused to their surroundings, and too scantily provided with the means that command respect in mercantile circles. They encountered distrust, and not seldom humiliating treatment. They soon quitted the centres of trade, and were scattered over the inhabited parts of the union. There the Jew had not been known before, except by name, and through the medium of Christian theology; and the picture drawn of him by ecclesiastical hands has never been such as to inspire confidence, or even to secure humane, not to say polite, treatment.

Suspicion and contempt met him at every step, and forced him not seldom, to hide his origin and to bury his faith in his bosom. Unless he did that, he could not ply his trade, nay, would be refused shelter and food. On this free soil he was often obliged to perform the rites of his religion and offer his prayers behind locked doors. It was not until personal contact had proved him to be a man, that he could safely avow himself a Jew. Nor had he, in his wide wanderings, the support which his competitors found everywhere in their organized churches; as no such as yet existed for him. He was thrown upon his own resources in every respect, and in sickness and death, which he faced often enough in traveling over the prairies, or camping in the swamps, or venturing into the neighborhood of pioneer settlers. The consolations of religion must have failed him, unless he could draw them from his own heart.

He had, however, been nerved and equipped for the battle by the severe school through which his fathers and himself had passed. He had not been spoiled by the world, expected no favors, and was, therefore, not liable to be much disappointed when he found the old prejudice still confronting him. Hard work and self-denial were his wont. Besides, his family affections, deep, holy, permanent, were his guardian angels, to save his feet from falling. The father, who sought here relief from the vexations of oppressive rule, kept the remembrance of wife and children constantly in mind, and deep down in his bosom. The prospect of being reunited with them was the vision of his hope, which nerved his arm and sustained his courage; the young man

who came here in search of a better future than his home offered him, knew of no higher ambition than to become the benefactor of his kindred. The more he learned to love his new home, the more intense grew his yearning for his dear ones to share his happiness.

But it would be wrong, indeed, to ignore the large share which the peculiar character of his religion had in the successful career of the Israelite. It had become the religion of a wandering tribe, symbolized in the word of the rabbi. The Shechina\* says: "I went with you into Egypt; I came with you into the promised land; and I shall go with you into the new captivity." Community of worship, of study, and of charitable work are, indeed, highly valued; but they are by no means indispensable to Hebrew piety. Over-abundant as is the Jewish ceremonial, it needs nowhere the consecrating power of the priest, or the hallowed atmosphere of the church. A prayer, a ritual, if only performed in accordance with the ordinances, carries its sanctity in itself. The devotional intention and knowledge of its requirements—these form, in Pharisaic doctrine, the sole conditions of acceptance on high. Nothing more is needed. This emancipation of Judaism from the dominion of the priesthood and local preëminence is the great achievement of Phariseeism, a system as yet little understood by the Christian, although the chief apostle avowed himself to have been reared under its influence.

The two features of the system which deserve consideration here are, what I will call activeness in religious practices, and soundness of ethical teachings. The main question with the Jew, of all times, has been the same that the rich young man of the New Testament proposed. "What more must I *do*?" The huge tomes into which rabbinical Judaism culminated are all directions for what is to be done or avoided. Mawkish sentimentalism and rapturous contemplativeness, that disdain common duties, find no nourishment or support in rabbinical theology. No indolent man can be pious after the heart of the rabbis; and divines have gravely defended the onerous exactions of the traditional law on the score of their being a corrective against the corruptions of

\* The Divine presence.



idleness. No further argument is needed to show the effects of such a system on the general disposition of its followers.

Equally favorable to the actual wants of the race was the rabbinical system of ethics. It sanctions and encourages all endeavors of man to better his condition, to acquire wealth, and to heartily enjoy all earthly blessings; and it elevates labor of all kind, manual and intellectual, to the dignity of a divine worship. Its precepts may give little satisfaction to those who are accustomed to look contemptuously on the ordinary pursuits of man; but they are eminently fit for every-day use, and serviceable for the building up of a happy, contented, and benevolent life.\* So indispensable, indeed, did the rabbis esteem them, that the oldest collection, commonly called "The Ethics of the Fathers," was embodied in the common prayer-book, and their recital, at stated periods, enjoined as a portion of the service. By this means the pithiest rules had become the possession even of the unlettered, a partial substitute for the preacher's exhortations, when these had become inaccessible to the Jew in his wanderings or in his seclusion. Thus equipped, he entered upon the new field which the United States opened up before him; with what success we have already seen. It remains for us to narrate the efforts he made to fit himself for his new sphere; then to glance at his social condition, and finally to describe the present aspect of his religious life.

GUSTAV GOTTHEILL.

\* Copious extracts from ethical writings are given in Zunz, "*Zur Geschichte und Literatur*," Berlin, 1845, and translated in a volume published by the American Jewish Publication Society, entitled "Hebrew Characteristics."